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ABSTRACT

Schools in the United States continue to experience rapid growth and substantial changes. Some of the directional shifts in school counseling programs in North Carolina over the last 16 years, and new directions for these programs, are presented in this manual. It opens with an overview of the philosophy and history of school counseling in the state and some of the major shifts school counseling has undergone. The guide then explores comprehensive school counseling programs, focusing on their development and their role in prevention and remediation. Instructional goals for guidance, services and activities, ways to assess need, and desired characteristics of school counselors and staffs in a comprehensive school counseling program are presented. Section 3 focuses on the school counselor, detailing such factors as training and licensure, supervision and evaluation in administrative work, consulting duties, and program delivery. Some of the components of the school counselor's job are also described, including program planning, counseling, consulting, coordinating, student appraisal, and professional practices and development. The text closes with a section on facilities and resources and contains a glossary. (RJM)

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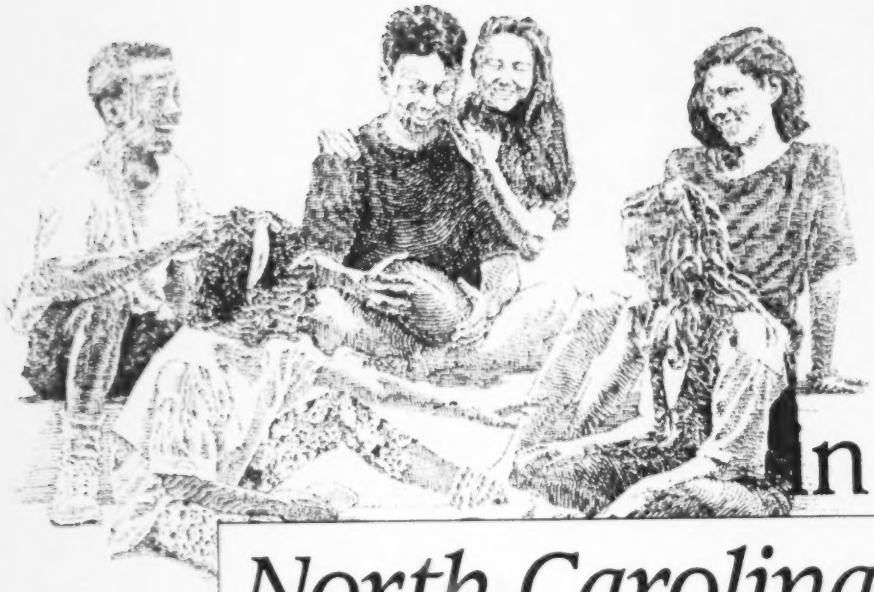

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School Counseling Section, Instructional Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent

Revised 1995

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On Our Way to Becoming School Counseling in North Carolina

School Counseling Section, Instructional Services
North Carolina Department of Public Instruction
Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent

Foreword

The Department of Public Instruction is committed to helping every child in the North Carolina public schools reach his or her highest potential. A balanced, comprehensive school counseling program is part of a combined educational effort toward that goal.

This revised manual reflects the directional shifts in the counseling program over the past 16 years and outlines new directions for that program. Revisions to the original material were made possible in cooperation with counselors, administrators and representatives of higher education from across North Carolina.

As school counseling moves toward integrating guidance goals into *The Standard Course of Study*, this manual will serve to define the role and responsibilities of school counselors and other personnel, and to describe the essential characteristics of a balanced, comprehensive counseling program.

January 1995

Bob Etheridge
State Superintendent

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Section 1

Philosophy and Historical Perspective

North Carolina, along with the rest of the nation, is experiencing rapid growth and change in many areas. These changes present new challenges for the school counseling programs of our state's schools.

A more diverse student population creates a myriad of needs to be addressed through school counseling programs. Increased societal pressures require that students in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 develop the self-knowledge and decision-making skills needed to face tough issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS awareness, sexuality and violence.

In the workplace, employers expect students to be better prepared to meet the new demands of business and industry. Rapidly changing technologies require all students to become life-long learners, constantly learning new strategies for attacking old problems and retraining for new career paths when jobs are lost.

A comprehensive school counseling program relies on joint efforts between school counselors, teachers, parents and the community. It can help prepare students to meet these challenges by providing a full range of services that addresses the needs of all students.

Since the late 1970s, school counseling in North Carolina has undergone several major shifts in program development. In 1979, the North Carolina State Board of Education adopted the *Master Plan for Elementary and Secondary Guidance in North Carolina*. This plan established a format and structure for local school systems to set goals and objectives for their guidance programs and to identify and clarify specific professional roles for teachers, school counselors, principals, and other educators within the guidance program.

In 1985, the State Board adopted a competency-based curriculum that includes a guidance section for pre-K through 12. The competency-based curriculum, including the Guidance Curriculum, is found in the *Teacher Handbook*, 17 volumes covering each of the curriculum areas. With this adoption, guidance in North Carolina became an integral part of the total school curriculum. The Guidance Curriculum in the *Teacher Handbook* emphasizes the role of classroom teachers in integrating guidance concepts and activities into their daily instruction. The Guidance Curriculum clarifies the role of all educators in providing guidance for students, and also clarifies the difference between the Guidance Curriculum and the school counseling program.

The school counseling program provides services for all students, including those who seek assistance with educational, personal, and career decisions as well as students who need more help than is offered by the Guidance Curriculum. These services include counseling, consulting, and coordinating activities provided by trained, certified school counselors. In addition, the school counseling program supports and assists teachers with the Guidance Curriculum.

In the 1990s, North Carolina is following a national trend of moving toward a more integrated approach to school guidance. Rather than a separate Guidance Curriculum manual, the educational program of a school will integrate the teaching of life skills from the manual into other curricula for grades pre-K to 12.

As the role of the counselor has expanded to include functions other than guidance, guidance counselors have become known as school counselors. The growing demands of preparing students to take a place in the world of work make it imperative that counselors rely on their skills of consultation and coordination. While other adults in the school and community can help guide students, the domain of counseling will remain with trained school counselors. Counselors also will provide a balanced program of services designed to meet the needs of their individual schools.

The purpose of this manual is to assist school systems in North Carolina in developing and implementing school counseling programs that assist teachers in integrating guidance goals into other curricula and provide services to help students reach their fullest potential. To accomplish this objective, school systems will need a comprehensive plan, adequate personnel, resources and facilities, and a commitment to provide preventive, developmental and remedial counseling services for all students in grades pre-K through 12. This manual is designed, not so much as a step-by-step approach, but rather as a description of the essential characteristics needed in a comprehensive school counseling program.

Section II

A Balanced, Comprehensive School Counseling Program

1. Introduction

Today's students face increased demands to meet educational, career and social goals. Schools provide a variety of educational opportunities to help students develop skills, make choices, learn concepts and explore ideas to help them become functioning members of society.

A balanced, comprehensive school counseling program provides services to promote student success. It involves school counselors working in conjunction with teachers, parents and community agencies. Many developmental concepts that must be covered through a comprehensive program can be incorporated into other classroom studies, giving the school counselor more opportunities for direct counseling, prevention and remediation functions.

More diverse school populations in North Carolina bring increased needs and challenges for school counselors. School counseling programs must effectively assess the needs of their individual schools in order to advocate for all students.

It is important that a comprehensive school counseling program provide a range of services in order to address the needs of all students. Counselors should strive to balance their time among all these services, based on the unique needs of their school community. By developing and implementing a comprehensive school counseling plan, school counselors can establish services and activities that allow them to spend most of their time providing direct services to children.

2. Purpose

School counseling programs in North Carolina assist all students in pre-K through 12 with educational, personal, social, and career development goals. While some specific activities and services may differ as school counseling programs progress from the primary to the secondary levels, these essentials of school counseling programs are consistent throughout all grades.

The purpose of a comprehensive school counseling program is threefold: providing developmental, preventive, and remedial services to students, parents, and teachers with the intent of helping people reach their full potential.

2a. Development

School counseling services and activities contribute to the school's mission of educating the whole child by providing sequential goals, objectives and activities that are appropriate for all students. Generally, these developmental activities and services focus on instructional and informational needs of students to assist them in educational, social, career, or personal development. Guidance goals can be integrated into other curricula to provide a sequential pre-K to 12 program that addresses the developmental needs of all students.

Developmental counseling varies according to the developmental levels, stages and needs of participants, counselor competence, available resources and other factors. For example, career counseling, one component of comprehensive school counseling, is developmental in nature, pre-K to 12, moving from self and career awareness to career exploration, to career decision-making, to career planning to implementation of goals, decisions, plans and utilization of support services. (American School Counselor Association Position Statement, 1994)

2b. Prevention

School counseling services and activities with a preventive focus often change learning environments, alter behaviors or adjust policies that no longer benefit individuals or groups. Preventive services also can benefit parents and teachers by helping them understand how children grow and learn.

School counselors who adequately assess the needs of their school populations are in an excellent position to design and implement services and programs that diminish the likelihood of learning difficulties, deficient personal/social skills, poor self development or future behavior problems.

2c. Remediation

Occasionally, students experience difficulties that inhibit learning and require more extensive intervention than preventive or developmental services offer. For this reason, remedial services are necessary. School counselors offer counseling, consulting and coordinating services that help school populations assess the needs, choose appropriate plans of action to meet those needs and follow through with those plans.

Because school counselors offer such a wide range of preventive, developmental, and remedial services, it is not always possible for them to provide great depth or duration in serving students who have serious problems. At these times, it may be necessary for counselors to refer the student and parents to another professional or community agency.

3. Instructional Goals For Guidance

While integrating guidance goals into the curriculum is the responsibility of all school educators, each classroom teacher is primarily responsible for his/her respective grade levels of the curriculum. The school counselor's role is to assist the teachers with integrating the instructional goals of guidance into *The Standard Course of Study* curricula.

There are four major goals of the guidance curriculum for all grade levels, as found in *The Standard Course of Study*. These goals are to help each student:

1) demonstrate a positive attitude toward self as a unique and worthy person;

2) gain life-planning skills that are consistent with needs, interests, and abilities;

3) develop responsible social skills and an understanding and appreciation of being a contributing member of society; and

4) demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the life-long process of learning, growing, and changing.

4. Services And Activities

A number of different activities and services, listed below, are typically found in a balanced and comprehensive school counseling program. The amount of time allotted to each of these services will vary from program to program and will be influenced by several factors including: number of counselors available, critical needs of the school, time of the school year, grade levels of students, counselor proficiency to perform particular functions, counseling facilities, and others.

A comprehensive program consists of activities that allow counselors to spend most of their time providing direct services to students. In addition, a balanced program includes services that focus on the developmental, preventive, and remedial needs of students. Generally, school counseling programs provide all of these services to some degree.

Individual counseling. This is a service that counselors provide to individual students, helping them with educational, personal, social, or career concerns. It is a confidential helping relationship that can last for a few or many sessions. When students require long-term counseling, school counselors often refer them to public and private agencies and practitioners outside the school who can meet their needs on a long-term basis.

Group counseling. School counselors often form groups of students who have similar concerns, and use counseling skills and processes with these groups to enable students to support one another and to learn skills to help deal with a specific problem. Group counseling relies on each member's willingness to share concerns, listen to other group members, accept suggestions to resolve concerns, and offer suggestions that will help other group members. Group counseling takes a high level of leadership skill on the part of the counselor. Some student concerns that are appropriate for group counseling are: dealing with academic problems, setting career goals, handling divorce, stopping substance abuse, and getting along with others.

Group guidance. One way that school counselors help teachers is by doing instructional and informational presentations with classes of students. Group guidance services can be done in small or large groups depending on the needs of the students and the purpose of the activity. Coping with test anxiety or training for conflict resolution are examples of group guidance. Counselors also make presentations to groups of parents and teachers. These services usually take the form of parent education programs or teacher in-service training on specific topics related to student development.

Consultation. Helping students in their educational development requires the combined efforts of parents, teachers, counselors, and other concerned professionals. School counselors consult with parents, teachers and others to determine the most appropriate services to help students. Sometimes counselors provide consulting services to groups of students, parents, and teachers. These group consultations can be problem-solving sessions, or they can be held for informational or planning purposes.

Student assessment. In determining the most appropriate services for students, counselors use several methods of gathering information and data. For example, methods of student assessment include, but are not limited to, educational tests, interest inventories, classroom observations, and review of health and cumulative records.

Referral/placement services. School counselors assist students, parents and teachers in determining the most appropriate service to help with educational, personal, social, and career decisions, and also in placing students in appropriate programs of study. Some of the strategies used by counselors to assist in this area are: helping students plan their educational program, assisting parents with referrals to community agencies, interpreting test data with teachers to make appropriate decisions about academic placement, and sharing occupational information with students who are seeking jobs.

Research/evaluation. An important part of continual program planning is the collection of data that illustrate what services are effective and which services need to be changed. Counselors collect these data by doing appropriate research and evaluation of the services provided in their programs.

Program coordination. In addition to the above services, school counselors assist with programs that help schools in their educational mission. These programs include schoolwide efforts or efforts that serve a specific group of students.

5. Assesing The Needs And Evaluating Programs

A balanced school counseling program meets the needs of individuals and groups within diverse student populations. It begins with annual and on-going needs assessment and program evaluation by school counselors. Assessing the needs of school populations helps to set program priorities and allows school counselors to channel their energies and efforts where they are needed most.

Program evaluation helps school counselors determine how well their school counseling program has met the identified needs of their school populations. In addition, annual evaluation is needed to assess the effectiveness of existing services. With increased emphasis on education accountability, program evaluation helps school counselors demonstrate to their administrators how well the school counseling program is meeting its stated goals.

5a. Needs Assessment

When planning a school counseling program, counselors should do an annual needs assessment of their school's populations to determine the strengths and weaknesses of particular program components. This process should focus on identifying needs in two areas: professional requirements for the counseling staff (personnel, resources, facilities) and needs of the school community. Both areas should be evaluated objectively and subjectively.

Assessment of school counseling needs usually includes input from students, parents, teachers, administrators, other school personnel and community members when possible. Information gathered from these groups is used to identify how well counseling needs of students and other groups are being met and to determine program priorities. Needs assessment processes consist of the following steps:

- identifying the purpose of needs assessment;
- selecting populations for assessment;
- designing and using assessment instruments and processes to collect data;
- collecting the data;
- interpreting data and determining priorities for the counseling program; and
- developing a written plan for school counseling services built around the identified needs of each school.

Samples of needs assessment instruments are found in the publication: *Criteria for Evaluation of School Counseling Programs*, published by N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

5b. Program Evaluation/Counselor Accountability

A final component of a comprehensive school counseling program is program evaluation. In order to formulate an effective annual plan of services, a counselor must evaluate the effectiveness of existing services and evaluate how well the school's counseling plan is meeting its stated goals. In addition, these evaluation processes will help counselors demonstrate their accountability to those who hire them as well as to those who use their services.

Program evaluation consists of the following components: (1) consumer satisfaction based on surveys of student, parent, and teacher groups; (2) outcome data related to specific services; (3) quantitative data illustrating the types of services, number of services, and number of clients being served; and (4) participation in research studies.

An appropriate system of program evaluation/counselor accountability consists of specific questions or concerns about program administration, the quality of services being rendered, allocation of counselor's time, satisfaction of consumers, and effectiveness of services. Program evaluation procedures should be concise and sufficiently focused so the counselor's time is used efficiently.

Some guidelines for program evaluation are:

- identify specific program areas that should be evaluated;
- determine what processes are needed to evaluate identified program areas;
- design reliable, yet manageable, instruments and processes for evaluation;
- make program decisions.

Samples of evaluation instruments are found in the manual, *Criteria for Evaluation of School Counseling Programs*, published by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

6. The Counselor And School Staff

A comprehensive school counseling program recognizes the need to include the entire school staff in providing services to students. For that reason, each member of the school staff has a role in assuring that the services of the counseling program address the educational, personal, social, and career needs of all students. In addition, the central office staff of the school system has an important supportive role in seeing that counseling services are coordinated in all the schools.

The Basic Education Program of North Carolina recommends a counselor:student ratio of 1:400. The BEP also recommends school staff ratios for psychologists, social workers, and nurses, who support the total educational program including school counseling services.

6a. School Level

Principal

- provides leadership for planning, implementing, evaluating and funding the counseling program as an integral part of the total educational program
- emphasizes the importance of integrating guidance into the curriculum and the teacher's role in guidance integration
- appoints a guidance committee in collaboration with the school counselor, or assigns guidance to a standing committee, to plan schoolwide activities and advise the counselor(s) on services needed

- assures that the counseling staff spends the majority of time providing direct services to students by providing adequate clerical assistance
- provides adequate administrative supervision of the counselor(s) and the school counseling program
- encourages appropriate needs assessment and program evaluation procedures by which decisions about counseling services are made, and
- provides adequate opportunities for staff development for counselors

School Counselor

- plans, implements, coordinates, and evaluates the school counseling program;
- assists the classroom teacher with integrating guidance into the curriculum by providing materials and resources, giving suggestions for integration with other curriculum areas, and presenting model activities to classes;
- counsels students, individually and in groups, about their educational, personal, social, and career concerns; and
- consults with persons who have influence on the development of students.

Teacher

- Integrates guidance goals into all classroom instruction to help students achieve identified educational, personal, social, and career-learning objectives;
- works with the counselor as a team in assisting students with concerns;
- refers to the counselor those students who need additional services beyond the instruction provided in the classroom;
- assists with schoolwide guidance activities when appropriate;
- advises students about their educational plans and course selections when appropriate.

Media Specialist

- keeps abreast of resources and materials that would be useful in integrating guidance into classroom lesson planning;
- informs teachers and counselor(s) of new materials that are available;
- displays guidance resources and materials so they are accessible to students; and
- orders resources and materials for teachers as the guidance committee recommends and as the budget permits.

Student Services Staff (psychologist, social worker, nurse)

- consults with teachers and counselors about student needs related to their specialty – psychology, social work, and health services;
- provides services to students as defined by each specialty area; and
- works with counselor in a team approach to helping students.

Other Support Programs Staff (job placement, dropout prevention, exceptional children's services, business/industry coordination)

- keeps school counselor informed about services in their respective programs;
- refers for counseling those students who need developmental, preventive, remedial services; and
- becomes involved in writing counseling goals for Individual Education Plans.

6b. School System Level

Board of Education

- establishes policies for providing school counseling programs as an integral part of the total educational process;
- provides adequate financial support for the program in such areas as personnel, in-service training, and materials.

Superintendent

- is knowledgeable of the needs of the total school population;
- views all school personnel as having responsibility for integrating guidance into the curriculum;
- provides committed leadership for active, ongoing school counseling programs;
- works with the board of education and the community to secure acceptance and support for counseling services;
- requires accountability for the implementation of a realistic school counseling program and for annual evaluation of the process toward meeting goals, objectives, and developmental student outcomes;
- keeps the public informed about the needs and the progress of the counseling program.

Assistant Superintendent/Director/Supervisor (instruction, vocational education, exceptional children, and student services)

- serves as a resource person to teachers and counselors by defining goals, objectives, and strategies used in planning and implementing the guidance curriculum;
- works with the coordinator of counseling services and other appropriate local education agency personnel in planning, implementing, evaluating, monitoring, and supporting a comprehensive program;
- interprets how local plans for vocational education, exceptional children, dropout prevention and other local/state/federal efforts cooperate with school counseling programs;
- cooperates with the coordinator of counseling services in providing leadership for the guidance curriculum and school counseling services;
- works with the coordinator of counseling services and other appropriate local education agency personnel in planning in-service training programs;
- coordinates resources for the counseling program with the coordinator of counseling services and other appropriate local education agency personnel (equipment, materials, funds, etc.).

Coordinator of School Counseling Services (If not designated, the responsibilities below should be assigned to the supervisor/director who is best qualified.)

- establishes a systematic approach for making school counseling programs visible at all levels;
- provides the superintendent and board of education with information relative to funding needs, personnel, programs, and evaluation;
- assists the administrative and supervisory staffs in planning and developing the guidance curriculum;
- establishes and maintains cooperative working relationships with all personnel whose roles and responsibilities affect the development and implementation of school counseling programs;

- provides leadership for developing appropriate models for individual schools;
- develops a dialogue with counselors on an individual basis;
- coordinates regularly planned meetings where counselors can share information, consults on specific problems, and develops systemwide programs;
- plans and coordinates in-service training to meet the needs of school counselors;
- keeps the superintendent and board of education informed regarding needed changes based on assessment and evaluation;
- helps to train and inform principals on the role of the school counselor;
- assures that all counselors receive appropriate clinical supervision of their counseling and consulting practices;
- promotes professional growth among all school counselors;
- provides assistance in evaluating programs at the school level;
- assists the personnel director in screening applicants for counselor positions; and
- keeps abreast of trends and issues in the school counseling profession and provides such information to counselors.

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Section III

The School Counselor

1. Training And Licensure

School counselors are trained at the graduate level of preparation. The areas of training include knowledge of human development, social and cultural foundations, counseling theory and practice, consultation, group processes and leadership skills, testing, educational research, career information and theories of development, professional ethics and orientation, and the school setting.

Licensure of school counselors in North Carolina is handled by the Licensure Division in the Department of Public Instruction. Licensure requires a master"s degree in school counseling from an approved program of study and successful completion of an exam designated by the Licensure Division.

Beginning counselors are "initially licensed" for a two-year period before achieving licensure. This period of initial licensure allows the beginning counselor to receive close supervision and support while demonstrating command of essential counseling competencies. (NOTE—The word "licensure" is synonymous with the word "certification." This usage of "licensure" should not be confused with the definition of "licensure" in the N.C. Licensed Professional Counselor Act, G.S. Article 24, Chapter 90.)

2. Supervision And Evaluation

Ideally, school counselor supervision occurs in three areas: administrative supervision, clinical supervision, and program supervision. Each of these areas is important in assisting counselors with their job performance and with their professional development.

2a. Administrative Supervision

Administrative supervision is done by the counselor"s immediate supervisor, usually the school principal. This area of supervision includes monitoring the counselor"s work schedule and completion of assigned tasks, and evaluating the counselor"s staff relationships, written reports, and presentations to the public. Some examples of the counselor behaviors and characteristics that are supported and evaluated in this area of supervision are: punctuality, work habits, writing correctness, appropriate use of language, respect of the school and school populations, and adherence to school procedures.

2b. Clinical Supervision

Because counselors provide specialized services in schools, it is recommended that they receive appropriate supervision in their counseling and consulting practices. This area of supervision, called clinical supervision, is best provided by a professional who is highly trained in counseling. Clinical supervision includes support and evaluation of counseling services for individuals and groups, consulting skills and practices, and instructional presentations to groups, such as classroom guidance.

2c. Program Supervision

A comprehensive school counseling program consists of a variety of services. These services are selected and provided based on the needs assessment of school populations. The counseling program parallels the mission of the educational program in the school and in the school system. For that reason, supervision of the counseling program should exist at the central office level. A supervisor or coordinator of school counseling programs should be trained and certified in counseling. Program supervision helps the school counselor assess school needs, plan a program of services, implement a balanced program, and evaluate services.

3. Job Description

The following functions and competencies describe the role of a typical school counselor (formerly referred to as guidance counselors). There are six major functions performed by school counselors in a comprehensive program: Program Planning, Counseling, Consulting, Coordinating, Student Appraisal, and Professional Development.

These six major functions also are found in the Performance Appraisal Instrument for evaluating counselors. Counselors and administrators should address these functions in writing a comprehensive school counseling plan.

3a. Program Planning

The school counselor establishes the school counseling program, develops activities and resources to implement and evaluate the program, and publicizes services of the program to the school community. The school counselor involves other school staff in making decisions about the school counseling program.

Essential competencies in program planning are described below:

1. Organizes the counseling program by assessing needs, setting goals and formulating a plan of action and program evaluation.
   - A counselor assesses needs for prevention and remediation by gathering statistical data such as numbers of student referrals for discipline, absences, repeated courses or grades, and evaluative data from teachers, parents and students. This information is used to formulate schoolwide plan, which is publicized to the school and community.
   - Counselor addresses all functions of the Performance Appraisal Instrument proportionately to the assessed needs of the school community. Such needs may include: redirection in career planning; opportunities beyond high school; study skills or learning style needs; relationships with peers, parents and authority figures; growth, development and understanding of self.
2. Initiates and coordinates schoolwide guidance and counseling activities.
   - Such activities include Career Day, National School Counseling Week, and Citizen of the Month. These can be done schoolwide or in individual classes, with the counselor providing assistance to other school personnel.
3. Manages time effectively and provides services on schedule.
   - Counselors, like other school faculty, should post a schedule which lists times for individual counseling, group counseling and classroom guidance. Sticking to this published schedule, with the exception of real emergencies, can help counselors manage time more effectively.
4. Maintains an organized, functional, and up-to-date office/counseling center.
   - Materials in these centers can include information for the entire school community on topics such as career development, community agency services, and child growth and development. Counselors also should maintain professional materials for their own growth and development. These materials can include periodicals, books, and software.

5. Seeks input from teachers and staff in making decisions about the school counseling program.
   - Counselor establishes a guidance advisory committee. This committee, comprised of school staff, parents, students and members of the community, can make recommendations on schoolwide programs, classroom guidance, and programs for specialized needs (such as tutoring, conflict management). These responsibilities may be assigned to an existing committee in the school.

3b. Counseling

The school counselor provides short-term individual and group counseling services to meet the developmental, preventive, and remedial needs of students. These services should be provided only by a school counselor licensed by the N.C. Department of Public Instruction.

Essential competencies in counseling are described below:

1. Demonstrates knowledge of counseling theories by selecting appropriate models and techniques for individual and group counseling.
   - Counselor must stay up-to-date on new models and techniques for working with a variety of students. A counselor can achieve this objective through self or supervised study, discussion with supervisors, attendance at workshops and participation in university courses.
2. Uses appropriate counseling processes and techniques for individual and group sessions to meet developmental, preventive, and remedial needs of students.
   - Counselor can demonstrate skills by presenting case studies that incorporate a needs-based counseling plan, a variety of counseling interventions, and an evaluation.
3. Uses appropriate assessment and diagnostic procedures for determining and structuring individual and group counseling services.
   - Counselor determines the needs of individuals and groups by interviewing students, consulting with teachers and parents, checking records and making observations.

3c. Consulting

The school counselor consults with students, parents, teachers, and other school and community personnel to assist in meeting the needs of students.

Essential competencies in consulting are described below:

1. Demonstrates knowledge of consulting processes and techniques with students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
   - Counselor demonstrates this knowledge by participating in conferences with parents, teachers, administrators, students, other professionals or combinations of these.
   - Counselor uses a consultation model which distinguishes this process from counseling.
2. Assists parents and teachers in understanding and responding to developmental levels of students.
   - Counselor advises parents and teachers about developmental stages of growth of children and adolescents in areas such as home and classroom behavior, curriculum development and peer relations. The counselor can communicate this through newsletters, handouts, workshops and individual conferences. The counselor also recommends materials on child development for a "professional shelf" in the school media center available to teachers and parents.

3. Presents instructional and informational programs to groups of students, parents, and teachers (e.g., parent education programs, group guidance, teacher in-service training).
   - Counselor often facilitates groups during and after school hours for purposes such as crisis intervention, financial aid for college or classroom management. These may be single-session or on-going programs.

4. Interprets achievement and aptitude data to assist school staff in curriculum planning.
   - Counselor helps teachers plan instruction based on results from standardized tests and other needs assessments.

3d. Coordinating

The school counselor coordinates all counseling services for students and assists with the coordination and implementation of student services in the school. The counselor also assists teachers with integration of guidance goals into the curriculum.

Essential competencies in coordinating are described below:

1. Communicates effectively with students, parents, and staff.
   - Counselor communicates through letters in teachers' boxes, columns in the school newsletter and flyers to parents.

2. Advocates for all students.
   - Counselor works with all populations in a school, such as exceptional children, college-bound students, students seeking employment information and potential drop-outs. Counselor also assists in identifying programs and policies that may be discriminatory.

3. Assists teachers with the integration of guidance activities into the curriculum.
   - Counselor provides teachers with information and activities so that they may integrate guidance goals into all of *The Standard Course of Study*. This can be done with a demonstration lesson or series of lessons on a particular topic.

   Since guidance itself is not a subject, counselors are not scheduled into daily or weekly classroom presentations. The role of the counselor is to be responsive to current and specialized needs of the student population.

4. Shares appropriate information about students with school personnel, parents, and community agencies.
   - Counselor presents data, trends and needs to individuals or groups in clear, easily understandable language. Counselor determines the learning needs of students and the best way of responding to these needs.
   - Counselor gathers information about developmental issues of students and other information that may be shared when needed using appropriate procedures consistent with privileged communications law.

5. Makes appropriate referrals of students to school and community programs.
   - Counselor is knowledgeable of school and community resources and programs to address educational and health needs of students if deemed appropriate by parents and school. When a case becomes too complex and time-consuming, referrals are made in a timely and professional manner.

6. Assists with the coordination of student services in the school.
   - Counselor serves as a member of the school's intervention team for at-risk students. Counselor may serve as a member of committees which impact counseling responsibilities and curricula. They also may provide information to assist these committees in understanding and considering student needs.
   - Publicity for counseling programs promoted by student services is the responsibility of the school counselor.

7. Assists with coordination of the school's annual testing program.
   - Counselor assists school test coordinator by offering student workshops and ensuring that testing conditions are appropriately secure, quiet and conducive to good test performance.
   - Counselor provides in-service training to teachers on correct administration procedures for the testing program.
   - Counselor assists with scheduling of make-up testing.

3e. Student Appraisal

The school counselor accurately interprets test results and other student data. The counselor also assists teachers with educational placement of students by using appropriate educational assessment strategies.

Essential competencies for student appraisal are described below:

1. Interprets testing results and other student data accurately.
   - Counselor possesses statistical expertise to interpret test results to individuals, groups and the larger community. Counselor conveys in lay terms an understandable summary of strengths and weaknesses as appropriate to the school's, student's or parent's needs.

2. Conducts non-standardized educational assessment according to professional practices (e.g., classroom observation).
   - Counselor is able to assess students through such non-test methods as inventories, teacher observation reports, student self-reports, records, other agency reports and anecdotal collections.

3. Uses standardized tests and inventories according to published practices and professional standards.
   - Counselor is familiar with recommendations of the American Counselor Association and the American School Counselor Association regarding test usage and interpretation. Counselor is able to use test instruments and data in a professional manner to benefit students and the entire school community. Counselor may need to address test-taking skills, test anxiety, test purposes and construction biases.

4. Assures that testing conditions and test administration of standardized tests in the school are appropriate.
   - Counselor assists school test coordinator and teachers to ensure that testing conditions (including schedules, rooms, and adult supervision) provide for maximum student performance.

3f. Professional Practices and Development

The school counselor adheres to ethical standards of the counseling profession and abides by the laws, policies, and procedures that govern the schools. The counselor also participates in professional associations and upgrades professional knowledge and skills when needed.

Essential competencies for professional practices and development are described below:

1. Adheres to ethical standards of the counseling profession.
   - Counselor maintains a professional positive and trustful relationship which focuses on ethical ways of dealing with the needs of the student. Respect for diversity is modeled as well as the student's right to appropriate and confidential services.
   - Counselors should be familiar with ACA and ASCA ethical standards. Individual cases involving ethics can be discussed with another professional counselor or supervisor to arrive at the best practice.
   - Counselor explains confidentiality and privileged communications to students and parents.

2. Follows the laws, policies, and procedures which govern school programs.
   - Counselor understands and adheres to the letter and spirit of regulations in keeping with goals and objectives of the school and community. Basic policies and guidelines are posted or otherwise made known in a positive and public manner.
   - Counselor is familiar with school board policy and any federal, state and local laws that relate to the counseling program or work with students.
   - Counselor uses tactful, generalized language to protect the rights and privacy of student. Counselor avoids behavior which could undermine the integrity of the school's counseling program.
   - Records with ample documentation are maintained in confidential, secure facilities. Computer records are protected.

3. Carries out other school duties assigned by the administration, provided these assignments do not interfere with the counseling program and services to students.
   - Counselor accepts a "fair share" of assigned tasks if performed in rotation with other school personnel. These may include lunch, bus or after-school responsibilities.
   - When considering any additional assignments, counselor and administrator should ensure that such duties would not interfere with the annual school counseling plan.

4. Takes part in professional development activities to improve knowledge and skills.
   - Counselor attends local, state and national counseling conferences and skill-building workshops. Counselor reads current professional publications and maintains up-to-date professional reference materials. Member ship in professional counseling associations can provide much knowledge and skill building.

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Section IV

Facilities And Resources

Basic physical facilities are essential to the services of a school counselor. A counseling center should have auditory and visual privacy for confidential sessions. There should be a reception area that functions as a waiting room and as a display center for materials, books, career information, and other resources. A conference room for small group counseling and guidance, testing, and case conferences should be available. Storage space for office supplies, equipment, testing materials, and educational/career information should be adequate.

Each counselor should have a private office with a telephone or access to a private office for confidential referrals and follow-up with parents and community agencies. The Basic Education Plan recommends that each school counselor, pre-K to 12, be provided an office of at least 150 sq. ft.

Elementary guidance areas serve small groups and individual guidance and should include 450 sq. ft. of space. Schools with more than one counselor may need additional space.

It is recommended that a small school for grades 6-12 have 300 sq. ft. of space for the guidance program, in addition to the counselor's office. Larger schools will require additional counselor offices, and the reception area may need to be expanded to handle the number of students who use the catalogues and other materials in the guidance center. A guidance/student services center in a large high school could run as large as 2,000 to 3,000 sq. ft.

The checklist below can be used to assess a school's counseling center.

1. The counselor's office has auditory and visual privacy.
2. A reception area is available and functions as a waiting room and display area.
3. Private phone is provided for counselor use.
4. A conference room is available.
5. Educational/career materials are attractively displayed and accessible to students.
6. Equipment, furniture, toys, materials, etc. are developmentally appropriate for the grade levels of students.
7. The counseling center has an appealing, comfortable atmosphere.
8. School records are securely placed where teachers and counselors can have access to them without disrupting counseling or consulting sessions.

Section V

Glossary

School Counseling Program: A comprehensive plan of services provided by a school counselor to focus on the developmental, preventive, and remedial needs of school populations. These services include counseling, consulting, and coordinating activities for educational, personal, social, and career development.

School Counselor: A certified professional who is trained at the graduate level in counseling and consulting practices and has in-depth knowledge of human development, helping relationships, social/cultural foundations, group processes, testing and assessment, career development, and the school setting.

Counseling: Processes used in individual helping relationships or in group sessions that focus on areas of concern or development, and help give direction or formulate a plan of action to address developmental needs or remedial concerns.

Consulting: An individual or group relationship formed between a counselor and other person(s) to assist a third party, or to focus on a situation that is affecting the learning process. School counselors consult with students, parents, teachers, and other professionals who can assist with the needs of students. Parent conferences about student progress or teacher conferences about managing student behavior are two examples of consulting relationships.

Coordinating: Services and activities provided by school counselors that facilitate the educational mission of the school. Examples of coordinating services are: providing information, assisting with educational or career placement, making referrals, planning counseling-related school events, and organizing a schoolwide testing program.

Guidance Curriculum: The Guidance Curriculum manual has been replaced by a set of guidance goals and objectives to be integrated into *The Standard Course of Study*, including students' personal/social development, career awareness and occupational choices, decision-making skills, and relationships with others. School counselors assist classroom teachers with the guidance curriculum by supporting them with materials, helping them plan ways to integrate guidance activities into daily instruction, and doing model guidance activities with teachers and their classes.

Guidance Committee: A committee of teachers, counselor(s), other school staff, parents, students, and community leaders who are selected by the principal and counselor to assess school needs, determine a focus for the guidance curriculum, advise the counselor on appropriate school counseling services and activities, and plan schoolwide guidance events.

Needs Assessment: A process by which the counseling needs of students, parents, and teachers are identified and prioritized. Needs assessments consist of surveys, interviews and other methods of data collection used by counselors to help identify educational, personal, social, and career needs within the school community.

Program Evaluation: Methods by which the counselor documents what services were provided in the school counseling program during the year and how effective those services were in meeting the identified needs of the school community.

Counselor Supervision/Evaluation: Processes and procedures related to the appropriate supervision, observation, and evaluation of school counselor performance. Basically, there are three areas of counselor supervision: administrative supervision, clinical supervision, and program supervision.